(c) The Jhansi Fort was protected as a monument of national importance under the Ancient Monuments & Archaeological Sites and Remains Act 1958 in 1986. Conservation works, based upon periodic inspections, as per normal practice, are taken up according to the assessed need of the monument and availability of resources.

The ASI has approved the proposal of Uttar Pradesh Tourism Department to flood light the monument.

Birth Centenary of Bhagwan Mahavira

1266. SHRI LALITBHAI MEHTA: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether 2600th birth centenary of Bhagwan Mahavira is to be celebrated by the Government;

(b) if so, whether Government has formed an All India Committee in this regard; and

(c) whether Government are considering to bring out coins of rupees 1, 2 and 5 having Dhyan Mudra of Bhagwan Mahavira as a part of 2600th birth centenary celebrations?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) and (b) The proposal to celebrate the 2600th Birth Centenary of Bhagwan Mahavira and to set up a National Committee in this regard is under consideration of the Government. However, the Centenary celebrations start only from 16th April, 2001.

(c) This is to be considered by the Committee as and when set up.

World Heritage Sites

1267. SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item published in the Asian Age (Delhi-Age) dated 23rd December, 1999, captioned, "India misses the mark with World Heritage Sites";

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government to compete in the matter of World Heritage, indicating the heritage sites/items with respect to which documentation has been put up for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Archeological Survey of India has submitted nominations to the UNESCO for inclusion of the following historic sites in the World Heritage List:

1. Temples at Bishnupur, West Bengal
2. Alchi Monastery, Leh, Ladakh, J & K
3. Golconda Fort, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh
4. Harappan site, Dholavira, Kutch, Gujarat
5. Rani-ki-Vav, Patan, Gujarat
6. Mattenchery Palace, Ernakulam, Kerala
7. Tomb of Sher Shah Suri, Sasaram, Bihar
8. Pre-historic Rock Shelters and Caves with painting at Bhimbetka, Madhya Pradesh
9. Fort Complex, Mandu, Madhya Pradesh
10. Ancient Buddhist site, Sarnath, Varanasi, U.P.
11. Hemis Monastery, Leh, Ladakh, J & K

These proposals submitted to UNESCO have not been rejected. World Heritage Committee of UNESCO has advised reformulation of the proposals in a revised format with additional information. Preparatory assistance is forthcoming from the UNESCO for this purpose.

Hike in the Entry Fee of Taj

1268. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item appearing in the Hindustan Times dated 12th January, 2000 under the caption "Taj entry fee hike elicits protests";

(b) if so, Governments' reaction thereto; and

(c) whether Government anticipate a decline in the rate of foreign tourists visit to Taj as a result of this hike and if so, the steps proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Government are aware of the hike in entry fees to the Taj Mahal by the Agra Development Authority.